

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 13-18 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, no new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Reconsideration based on the above amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 1-12 are allowed.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,847,785 to Izumi; rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,302,468 to Namiki et al.; rejects claims 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,408,836 to Kikuno; rejects claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) for U.S. Patent No. 5,164,853 to Shimazaki. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 13-18 are canceled and thus the rejections of these claims are now moot.

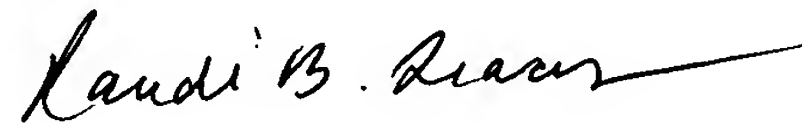
Because claims 1-12 are allowed, prompt allowance is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-12 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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